



AMESBURY

Essex County



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NARRATIVE

Narrative

Amesbury is a suburban community with an unusual industrial and manufacturing history. First settled by Europeans in 1645, the town's earliest industries included mills, shipyards and a heavily used ferry operation across the Merrimac River to Newburyport. There were always scattered farms in the community, but unlike most Colonial settlements, agriculture was secondary to an aggressive maritime and industrial economy. By the 19th century, the shipbuilding, shipping and fishing which had employed most of the population was giving way to textiles, ironworks, saw and grist mills that had been established on a 90' drop of the Powow River, which provided crucial water power.

Among the most interesting of Amesbury's products were the carriages which achieved some renown in the area. The same company made the transition into the 20th century by converting its production into making automobile bodies, and until the Great Depression of 1929, auto body making was a major industry in the town. The same handsome stone industrial buildings that once made nails and cloth are now filled with a diversity of manufactured products and the situation of Amesbury at a transportation crossroads of Interstate 95 and 495 gives the town a good competitive edge for both residential and commercial development.

Along with the sturdy 19th century commercial buildings, Amesbury is also rich in Federal-period residences, which the community carefully preserves as its link with the past.

(Seal supplied by community. Narrative based on information provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

Northeastern Massachusetts, bordered by Merrimack on the west; South Hampton, New Hampshire, on the north; Salisbury on the east; and Newburyport and West Newbury on the south. Amesbury is located on the Merrimack River 10 miles northeast of Haverhill, 43 miles north of Boston, and 260 miles from New York City.

Total Area: 13.65 sq. miles

Land Area: 12.41 sq. miles

Population: 14,997

Density: 1,208 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Haverhill Station)

Normal temperature in January.....24.7°F

Normal temperature in July.....72.5°F

Normal annual precipitation.....44.4"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Newburyport West

Regional Planning Agency

Merrimack Valley Region

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)

Boston



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (978) 388-8100

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Town Manager

Representative Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1668

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

Number	%
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Total Registered 7,802

Democrats 2,491 31.9 % Republicans 1,202 15.4 % Other parties 10 0.1 % Unenrolled Voters 4,099 52.5 %

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Amesbury town, Essex County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	16,450	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	16,450	100.0
Male.....	7,932	48.2	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	156	0.9
Female.....	8,518	51.8	Mexican.....	33	0.2
Under 5 years.....	1,100	6.7	Puerto Rican.....	37	0.2
5 to 9 years.....	1,290	7.5	Cuban.....	19	0.1
10 to 14 years.....	1,302	7.9	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	67	0.4
15 to 19 years.....	993	6.0	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	16,294	99.1
20 to 24 years.....	676	4.1	White alone.....	15,889	96.6
25 to 34 years.....	2,380	14.5	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	3,177	19.3	Total population.....	16,450	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	2,346	14.3	In households.....	16,094	97.8
55 to 59 years.....	708	4.3	Householder.....	6,380	38.8
60 to 64 years.....	569	3.5	Spouse.....	3,267	19.9
65 to 74 years.....	1,025	6.2	Child.....	4,993	30.4
75 to 84 years.....	650	4.0	Own child under 18 years.....	3,956	24.0
85 years and over.....	294	1.8	Other relatives.....	579	3.5
Median age (years).....	36.7	(X)	Under 18 years.....	205	1.2
18 years and over.....	12,157	73.9	Nonrelatives.....	875	5.3
Male.....	5,750	35.0	Unmarried partner.....	431	2.6
Female.....	6,407	38.9	In group quarters.....	356	2.2
21 years and over.....	11,715	71.2	Institutionalized population.....	298	1.8
62 years and over.....	2,299	14.0	Noninstitutionalized population.....	58	0.4
65 years and over.....	1,969	12.0	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	766	4.7	Total households.....	6,380	100.0
Female.....	1,203	7.3	Family households (families).....	4,228	66.3
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	2,199	34.5
One race.....	16,269	98.9	Married-couple family.....	3,267	51.2
White.....	15,988	97.2	With own children under 18 years.....	1,626	25.5
Black or African American.....	105	0.6	Female householder, no husband present.....	723	11.3
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	37	0.2	With own children under 18 years.....	448	7.0
Asian.....	95	0.6	Nonfamily households.....	2,152	33.7
Asian Indian.....	10	0.1	Householder living alone.....	1,713	26.8
Chinese.....	40	0.2	Householder 65 years and over.....	568	8.9
Filipino.....	10	0.1	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	2,324	36.4
Japanese.....	8	-	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	1,320	20.7
Korean.....	8	-	Average household size.....	2.52	(X)
Vietnamese.....	9	0.1	Average family size.....	3.09	(X)
Other Asian ¹	10	0.1	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	4	-	Total housing units.....	6,623	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	2	-	Occupied housing units.....	6,380	96.3
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	243	3.7
Samoa.....	2	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	-	-	occasional use.....	53	0.8
Some other race.....	40	0.2	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	0.7	(X)
Two or more races.....	181	1.1	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	3.8	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one			HOUSING TENURE		
or more other races: ³			Occupied housing units.....	6,380	100.0
White.....	16,157	98.2	Owner-occupied housing units.....	4,198	65.8
Black or African American.....	157	1.0	Renter-occupied housing units.....	2,182	34.2
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	131	0.8	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.76	(X)
Asian.....	125	0.8	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.07	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	5	-			
Some other race.....	73	0.4			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State: 263

Conventional Federal: 0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP: 13

Federal (Section 8): 84



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

The development of transportation resources in the Merrimack River Valley, where Amesbury is situated, was shaped by the history of the region as a major site of American industrial development in the nineteenth century. The area has exceptionally good highway and rail facilities linking the major cities and towns to each other and to the port, airport, and intermodal facilities of Boston.

Major Highways

The principal highways serving the area are Interstate 95, which runs from Maine to Florida, and Interstate 495, the Outer Belt around Boston.

Rail

There is no passenger or freight rail service in Amesbury, but the network of intermodal facilities serving Massachusetts is easily accessible.

Bus

Amesbury is a member of the Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority (MVRTA), which provides fixed route service between Haverhill, Amesbury, and Newburyport. By the end of 1994 the town expects to receive paratransit service from the MVRTA.

Other

The Newburyport-Plum Island Airport, a privately owned public-use facility, is easily accessible from Amesbury. It has a 2,520'x 50' asphalt runway. Instrument approaches available: Non-precision.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

The Bartlett Museum

270 Main Street

(978) 388-4528

John Greenleaf Whittier Home

86 Friend Street

(978) 388-1337

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

Amesbury Hospital

Long Term Care

Maplewood Manor Nursing Home

Merrimack Valley Nursing Rehab. Center

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

Eastwood Rest Home Inc

Hillside Rest Home

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.